WELSH BOARD OF HEALTH
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A.

BUILTH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Survey Report for 1925.

By W. BLACK JONES, M.D., D.P.H., Medical Officer of Health.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

1. GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	105,775
Population, Census 1921	3,989
Population. estimate for 1925	3,989
Number of inhabited houses, 1921 ...	943
Number of inhabited houses, 1925 ...	919
Number of families or separate occupiers, 1921	943
Number of families or separate occupiers, 1925	919
Ratable value	£30,866
Sum represented by a penny rate	£128 12 2

Social Conditions.—The District is an agricultural one, it is scattered over a large area, but there are five villages, viz., Llangammarch Wells, Garth, Beulah, Oaklands and Erwood.

2. VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1925.

		Total.	M.	F.		1925.	1921.
Births	Legitimate	73	39	34	Birth rate ...	19·3	23·8
	Illegitimate	3	2	1			
Deaths		51	30	21	Death Rate ...	12·7	14·2

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth ... Nil.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age :— 78

Legitimate, 6 ; Illegitimate, Nil. Total, 6=82 per 1,000 births.

Deaths from Measles ... ... Nil.
,, Whooping Cough ... ... Nil.
,, Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age) ... 1

Births.—The birth rate was 19·3, that for England and Wales was 18·3.

Deaths.—The death rate was 12·7, that for England and Wales was 12·2. Of the deaths, 22 persons died over 70 years of age. Of the infantile deaths, two died from congenital debility, one each from Bronchopneumonia, Convulsions, Enteritis and Jaundice.

Causes of Death.—Tuberculosis, 1 ; Cancer, 5 ; Cerebral Hæmorrhage, 7 ; Heart Disease, 10 ; Arteriosclerosis, 1 ; Bronchitis, 4 ; Pneumonia, 1 ; Diarrhœa (under 2 years), 1 ; Congenital Debility, 2 ; Suicide, 3 ; Other death from violence, 1 ; Other defined diseases, 15. Total, 51.

Poor Law Relief—This amounted to £754 18s. 11d. for the year ending 31st March, 1925. The Infirmary of the Builth Union is situated in the Urban District of Builth Wells. In the same area is the Builth Cottage Hospital ; it receives patients from the Rural District, and is supported by voluntary contributions.

During the period under review, the District has been free from any serious epidemic.

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

There is no hospital for infectious disease in the area. Several conferences have been held with neighbouring Districts for the provision of a joint hospital, but owing to the excessive cost, no progress has been made.

There is no institutional provision for unmarried mothers, nor are there any ambulance arrangements.

Clinics and Treatment Centres—A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is held once a month in the Urban District of Builth Wells, it is available for those residing near by in the Rural District. The Welsh National Memorial also have a Dispensary in the Urban District, a physician attends twice a month.

Public Health Officers—The Staff consists of a Medical Officer of Health (who also inspects slaughterhouses) and a Sanitary Inspector, both are part time. Exchequer grants are made towards their salaries. There is also a Deputy Medical Officer of Health, unpaid.

Nursing.—The Builth Wells Nursing Association, the Llanwrtyd Wells Nursing Association and the Beulah Nursing Association each maintain a certificated Midwife, who attends as a general nurse, and who all visit in the District. The County Council gives a grant to each Association, which are also aided by the Rural District Council. There is a bona-fide midwife at Llangammarch Wells. There is no provision for nursing cases of infectious disease.

Laboratory Work.—Arrangements have been made for the examination of swabs in suspected cases of Diphtheria.

Legislation in Force.—The Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890. Regulations with respect to Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

The above are carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.—The water supply consists mainly of shallow wells and springs. In many cases, farms and other buildings (including three hotels at Llangammarch Wells) are provided with a constant supply conveyed in pipes from springs. Oaklands is supplied with water from the mains of the Builth Wells Urban District, and the drainage empties into the sewers of that District. The supply of water at Garth is unsatisfactory both in quantity and quality, a scheme for a better supply is under consideration.

There are 48 houses connected to a main supply.

Rivers and Streams.—There does not appear to be any pollution of rivers.

Closet Accommodation.—There are 112 water closets, and 834 privies ; as the area is scattered, it does not appear that the privies are a danger to health.

Scavenging.—This is carried out in Oaklands by the Parish Council ; otherwise, refuse is disposed of by the occupiers.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—The Sanitary Inspector reports that he has made the following number of inspections :—

Nuisances	... 22
Cowsheds and Dairies	... 59
Bakehouses	... 2
Houses disinfected	... 8
Notices served :—	
Informal	... 6
Statutory	... 1

The above notices have been complied with.

The slaughter-houses have been inspected on 21 occasions, these and the above premises have been found on inspection to be clean.

Smoke Abatement.—No occasion for action has occurred.

Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by Byelaws or Regulations :—

Slaughter-houses	... 3
Cowsheds and Dairies	... 15
Bakehouses	... 1

Schools.—The sanitary condition and water supply of the schools is fairly good, excepting that the school at Garth is not provided with a proper water supply.

The school at Llanafanfawr was closed for an outbreak of Scarlet Fever.

Housing.

I. General Housing Conditions in the Area.

1. General Housing Conditions : On the whole they are good, the farm houses are well built, and the cottages attain a fair standard.
2. There is little demand for new houses, except in the Parish of Treflis, where two houses are in course of construction, and another is contemplated.
3. The population remains stationary, and no changes are anticipated.

II. Overcrowding.

There is no overcrowding.

III. Fitness of Houses.

1. (a) The general standard as mentiond above is good.
   (b) The defects are generally due to dampness.
   (c) The above defects are usually due to the neglect of the owners, and are always remedied when notice is served.
2. The following action has been taken :—
   (a) Under the Public Health Acts... ... ... nil.
   (b) Under the Housing Acts ... ... nil.
3. No difficulties have been found in remedying unfitness.
4. Conditions so far as they affect the water supply and refuge disposal are satisfactory, with the exception of some houses at Garth, as mentioned above.

IV. There are no unhealthy areas.

V. There are no Bye-laws as to houses.

Housing Statistics.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total	4
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts	Nil

1. **Unfit Dwelling Houses.**

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 6

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... 65

(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ... Nil

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects fit for human habitation 6

2. **Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.**

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers 6

3. **Action under Statutory Powers.**

A.—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ... ... Nil

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ... Nil

C.—Proceedings under sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of representations made with a view of making Closing Orders ... Nil

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... Nil

(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the houses having been rendered fit ... ... Nil

(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... Nil

(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... Nil

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) **Milk Supply.**

In November, 1925, the Council, after considering the new legislation which had come into force, arranged for two meetings of licensed milk dealers. One was held at Builth Wells, and the other at Llangammarch Wells ; each was addressed by Mr. J. P. Railton, M.R.C.V.S., when the duties of milk vendors were explained.

The Council have made arrangements for milk samples to be taken during the coming year.

1. No tuberculous milk or cattle have been found.
2. No licenses for the sale of milk under special designations have been applied for.
3. No licenses have been refused for any cause.

(b) **Meat.**

1. The slaughter-houses are inspected periodically, no case of diseased meat has been found.
2. The Inspector also visits shops in accordance with the Meat Regulations, 1924.
3. There is no public abattoir.

The following private slaughter-houses were in use at the dates mentioned :—

	In 1920.	In January, 1925.	In December, 1925.
Registered	4	3	—
Licensed	—	—	3

(c) The Inspector inspects the bakehouse at Llangammarch Wells, and has found it to be clean.

(d) No food poisoning has occurred.

No action has been taken with regard to condensed milk.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious Diseases.

On the whole, the prevalence of infectious diseases since 1920 has been light, but Scarlet Fever is on the increase. In 1921 there were 3 cases, none the next year, in 1923 there were 6 cases, one the following year, and in 1925 there were 14 cases. These mainly occurred in the Parish of Llanafanfawr, and the adjoining Parishes. The school in that parish was closed during the epidemic. This outbreak emphasises the need of an infectious diseases hospital.

Diphtheria anti-toxin is always available if required. Arrangements have been made for the examination of swabs from suspicious throats.

No use of the Shick and Dick tests has been made.

No vaccinations have been made by the Medical Officer of Health.

The prevalence of non-notifiable infectious diseases has been slight. It was not necessary to close any school, except the above-mentioned one.

Facilities are available at the Builth workhouse for the cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons and their belongings.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during 1925.—Scarlet Fever, 14; Diphtheria, 1; Puerperal Fever, 1; Pneumonia, 4; Varicella, 1.

None of the above cases were admitted to hospital, and there were no deaths.

The Age Periods of the above cases are shown below.

Age Periods.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Puerperal Fever.	Pneumonia.	Varicella.
2	—	—	—	2	—
3	—	—	—	—	—
4	1	—	—	—	—
5	2	—	—	1	—
10	6	—	—	—	1
15	1	—	—	—	—
20	4	—	1	—	—
35	—	1	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	1	—

Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

New Cases.

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
Age Periods.	M.	F.	M.	F.
5—10	—	—	1	—
10—15	1	—	—	—
25—35	—	2	—	—
35—45	—	1	—	—

One female died from Pulmonary Tuberculosis at the age of 17 years.

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.—No action was taken under these Regulations.

Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62.—No action was taken under this Section.

Maternity and Child Welfare.—No incidence of infectious disease occurred by which mothers or children were endangered.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.—The Inspector has inspected the work places, and finds the sanitary conditions satisfactory.

Builth Wells,
21st March, 1926.

W. BLACK JONES.